

**Introduction to
Philosophy of the
Human Person
Quarter 2 – Module 3:
Human Person and Society**



What is It

A. Pre-Industrial Societies

- a. **Tribal Society** - the term “tribe” denotes a group of peoples living in a primitive setting under a leader or chief. The term ‘tribal society’ associates it to other meaning such as “primitive society” or “preliterate society.” The word ‘tribe’ has become an important technical term which pertains to a political unit in a certain territory. The term’s use is rooted from Latin which is associated to the political divisions or orders of the Roman empire. Tribal societies are small in scale; bound to their spatial and temporal range of relations in terms of society, law, and politics; and possess a moral code, cult, and wide range of belief system. The language systems of tribes are unwritten which provides a narrow extent of communication. At the same time, tribal societies show a self-sustaining structure which is absent in the modern society. This is achieved by the close connections that exist between tribal organizations, and by the focusing of a leader or person to multiple roles. Unity and coherence exist in tribal values that are closely related to social groups and are provided with an intensity characteristic of all “closed” systems of thought.
- b. **Feudal Society** - Feudalism refers to the economic, political, and social system that prevailed in Europe from about the ninth to the fifteenth century. Due to the lack of effective centralized government during this period, kings and lords granted land and provided protection to lesser nobles known as vassals. In return, these vassals swore oaths of loyalty

and military service to their lords. Peasants known as serfs were bound to the land and were subject to the will of their lords. One social class system or economic form was not realized for Europe over the whole Middle Ages. A new economy after medieval period known as capitalism is still in progress. Medieval world is known for its traditional land economy and military service, and an urban society. These led to a feudal-based social-class system and trade & commerce based on money or capital. For the urban or town environment, merchants, artisans, and customers formed the core of the society. They saw manufacture as the most important business to produce goods for sale and buy in the local market economy. Local products was to have an impact in other areas, such as regional fairs, port cities, and far trade destinations.

B. Industrial society is the one which uses advance technology to drive a massive production industry that will support a large population. For example, the United States is an industrial society because a huge portion of its economy is tied to jobs that involve machine work, like factory farming or auto-assembly plants, that has a combination of machine and human employees to produce goods. The objective of an industrial economy is the fast and efficient manufacturing of standardized products. The same goes if one avails a car, there is a chance that the car was mass produced because it operates similarly to other models, and its parts can be replaced with other parts because they are identical.

C. Post Industrial Society - is marked by a progress from a manufacturing-based to a service-based economy. Post industrialization is most evident in countries and regions that were among the first to experience the Industrial Revolution, such as the United States, western Europe, and Japan. Daniel Bell, an American sociologist, first coined the term 'post-industrial' in 1973 in his book "The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting," which describes several features of this kind of society. Post-industrial societies are characterized by:

- a. a shift from the production of goods to the production of services;
- b. the replacement of manual laborers with technical and professional workers (computer engineers, doctors, and bankers) as the direct production of goods is moved elsewhere;
- c. the replacement of practical knowledge with theoretical knowledge;
- d. focusing to the theoretical and ethical implications of new technologies, which helps society avoid some of the negative

- features of introducing new technologies, concerning environment and energy;
- e. the development of recent scientific disciplines—that involve new forms of information technology, cybernetics, or artificial intelligence—to evaluate the theoretical and ethical implications of new technologies;
- f. an emphasis on the university and polytechnic institutes which produce graduates who innovate and lead the new technologies contributing to a postindustrial society; and
- g. the changing values and norms which reflects the influences on the society. In an instance, outsourcing of manufactured goods changes how members of a society see and treat foreigners and immigrants. Also, those individuals previously occupied in the manufacturing sector find themselves with no clearly defined social role.

DIGITAL SOCIETY AND THE INFORMATION AGE

Digital technologies have wildly affected our interactions and activity in the 21st century. They have significantly changed our way of learning, working and socializing. In this modern world we rely with the use of modern technology which has led to considering the possible outcome for the society, concerning how we would take part in interaction, and how we can use these digital tools and communication channels.

Having our heads of digital society in our minds, we first have to think of the *information society*; which are correlated with the progress and development of digital information and communication technologies to the internet at least. Information society plays a vital role with regards to the circulation and control of made-up ideas which affects political, economic, social and cultural aspects. So, what does this mean for the everyday citizen?

These informative societies have paved many opportunities reaching bigger audiences like never before. With a wider scale of the world's demography, primarily Westerners, have access to sources and technologies which enables them to connect with enough activities whether economic, social, political, or educational. We can manipulate the phasing of learning (e.g. free sources) or businesses (e.g. online selling) without a large sum of money used as a capital and we can share our ideas and perspectives to the international audiences as we connect beyond.

What do we mean by digital citizenship?

Now, one of the main terms in the modern world is the 'digital citizen'. What does this actually mean? A digital citizen is a person who is knowledgeable and responsible enough to effectively use different social platforms in the internet. They often engage in useful topics and issues that will help build a better society, politics and government. If we will dig deeper, digital citizenship might look simple. We might think that it is just about using the internet safely. However, we also need to consider and understand that

this citizenship can get complicated, especially if we are going to criticize and show interest in sensitive topics as we start to become a digital citizen, using digital media to actively participate in society and politics.

If we look a little closer at the field of 'citizenship studies' this will lead us to a better understanding of what digital society really means. A citizen is defined as an individual character who is viewed as a member of a society while citizenship considers an individual's behavior in terms of rights, obligations and functions of said citizen. Being a citizen of a state requires tons of obligations and duties such as work, taxation and obedience of laws. On the other hand, citizens also have their rights, it includes civil rights such as freedom of speech and expression, to stand for what we believe in, and rights to a private life; political rights, or the right to vote and social rights to health care and welfare. In this course we will tackle these rights as we look at real definition of what it means to be a citizen in the modern society and how legislation and the government shape our ability to be democratic citizens who can stand for the truth.

What does this all mean then in the digital age?

We have said that being a digital citizen requires active participation online, not just access and use. In their book "Being Digital Citizens" (2015) Isin and Ruppert suggest that if we constitute ourselves as digital citizens, we have become subjects of power in cyberspace. We are enacting ourselves on the internet, considering and understanding the opportunities presented by this medium, such as anonymity, communication, and influence. In short, we can use digital technologies to engage and participate on many levels in society and political life.

The virtual society and the technological devices today are starting to reshape the human person and human interactions and relationships. More and more interactions are done in the virtual world than in the actual world. People are more thrilled to see their virtual selves than their actual selves. They are more themselves online than offline. And this leads one to ask, "Who am I?" in a more complex manner. People seem to start manipulating personalities as they exhibit different behaviors in different worlds. People fall in love in virtual worlds. Someone breaks up with a partner through a text message. Human relations seem to start losing an important element in living – commitment. Virtual worlds and disembodied relations lack commitment. We can always step back and retreat in a virtual world. We can always create a new self when our avatars die or when it has become undesirable. We can always ignore message. Virtual realities remove risks; and because we do not want to risk, we patronize the virtual world. Commitment is hard. To commit is to risk. In the virtual world, one's anonymity lessens, if not completely removes risks. When we are confronted with real social problems like war and famine, discrimination harassment and corruption; we let the world know that we condemn these evils and express participation in the abolition of these problems. How? By a futile click to like. People in the modern technological society ultimately make no real commitments

THE DISEMBODIED SUBJECT

The dissatisfaction and frustration of the human person with bodily limitations drive the person to prefer a disembodied human relation. At the outset, it must be clarified that the term disembodied subject does not mean that in the technological society, human persons are no longer living with their bodies. However, in a manner of speaking, people are slowly putting aside their bodies in relating with others because the technological society offers an alternative which apparently resolves human of an embodied subject. Face-to-face interaction is too stressful and difficult while virtual interactions are relatively easier. Consequently, we find many cases where people prefer communicating using virtual world, even if the person involved is someone seen on a regular basis. Moreover, the disembodied interaction among people is aggravated by modern technological devices. The different gadgets that are produced today support disembodied human relations. The scene which the technological society creates is very familiar to us: we see a family, or friends, gathered around a table or in a room, but with very minimal actual embodied human interaction. Everyone is glued to their devices – cellphones, tablets, laptops, or any device and they are all probably interacting with their virtual societies. One is busy with other things other than the persons within the room or in the closest proximity. The kind of human interaction, which was still present just two decades ago, is obviously altered now. And however much we try and remind ourselves to refrain from being alone with our devices while being with others, we always fall back into interacting with our gadgets. We prefer to interact with our phones with the unfinished game that we are playing, with the new music and movies we downloaded, or with our friends who are probably in the situation – with other people as well, but alone with their devices too. Interacting with actual embodied subjects, face-to-face, is becoming more and more difficult today. It is indeed more difficult to relate to other embodied subjects than to relate with things.

The practice of selfie is another move towards disembodied human relations. People used to approach other people to take their photos. But the regained popularity of selfie gave people the idea that they do not need the other to take photos. And the invention of the monopod aggravates the condition. The monopod allows us to take group selfies without missing a member of our group. It has solidified the person to take our photos. Maybe we will just disturb the person by asking him to take our photo. But maybe we are more afraid of being rejected than by the idea of bothering the other.

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The Senior High School faculty members of Camp Vicente Lim Integrated School took a group selfie while preparing modules for distribution.

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